

RAILWAY POOLS EXPLAINED

MR. FINCH'S ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS BY THE SENATE COMMITTEE.

Mr. T. Thomas Fortune, Editor of the Organ of the Colored People in this City, Speaks his Mind About the Negro in the South.

Railroad Commissioner Fink testified before the Senate committee yesterday. He came from Germany thirty-four years ago to work as a civil engineer in the construction of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. During the past six years he said he had been at the head of a bureau in which are about forty railroads that are trying to unite in establishing and maintaining uniform passenger and freight tariffs. This gives to the public the advantage of dealing with one railroad instead of with 1200. The five trunk lines and all their connections are in this combination, which is in the nature of a clearing house, through which railroads divide profits and settle quarrels.

"What are the water connections of the system?" Senator Blair inquired.

"The principal water connections are the inland lakes, the Erie and Welland Canals, and the Mississippi River. They are important factors in fixing the rates of transportation. They secure cheap transportation and regulate railroad traffic."

"What do they do?"

"Water rates are cheap. Railroad companies are designed to recover their charges by what the water routes charge, and to secure a fair share of the business. The effect of water routes is not felt at the points of connection, but at the intermediate points. Extra charges are made except for marine transport."

Combination between water routes is hardly possible, for if steamship companies combine to charge high rates, no line can hope to weather the arrangement, and it is easier to put on a new water route than a new railroad in opposition to a combination.

"Is there a tendency to combine between the water routes?"

"Railroads cannot control rates on water routes, even if they own the routes, as is done by the fact that several railroads own the same water route, and will keep rates up above competitors. The regulators of the price of railroad fares and of freight rates are the railroads themselves, and ocean coast lines, like Erie, can have a great thing to do."

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"The new school building, which stands upon the hill above the garden city, is a handsome pile of red and yellow stone, roofed with slate, and finished with copper cornices and finials, and diversified exteriorly with porches, a central tower, a portico, and bell tower, and a branch set in copper for the ventilation of the laboratory. The front of the building is nearly 300 feet long, from forming a gabled pan like the letter E. It rises three stories into the air, and has a deep, wide, arched entrance. Additional stories are on the centre, and at the top, and the high Mansard roofs give additional diversity to the edifice. The interior arrangements are connected by an elevator, and several staircases, besides the main one, all of which are easily accessible.

The first floor comprises the main hall, 270 feet long and 10 wide, and lateral corridors, which are admirably vaulted, and paved with Minton tiles of beautiful design. The harmonies of color are admirably pre-arranged, and the walls are covered throughout the building. The different stories are connected by an elevator, and several staircases, besides the main one, all of which are easily accessible.

The second floor is the masters' and pupils' rooms, and in the centre, extending through two stories, is the chapel, forty-two by sixty-five feet, arranged with simple, solid, and in the north and a organ, and sacristy. The windows are filled with stained glass, under the design of the walls, and nicely decorated vestry. The white ash is paved with marble, the woodwork being white, and panelled and paneled.

In the third story are the cabinet and art galleries, the library, with bathing room, and an apartment for visitors, and many dormitories in the corridors.

This school contains the gymnasium, a large studio for art pupils, a laboratory, and dormitories.

In the fourth story are the armory, and physiotherapy room, and the residence of the steward, room, store rooms, kitchens, bakers, and servants' hall.

On the fifth floor is the residence of the steward, room, store rooms, kitchens, bakers, and servants' hall.

The railroads are dead capital to stockholders, but not to bondholders, or to those who live on the railroads. The middleman represents himself as working in the service's interest, but he is not a middleman, but a master. He takes about the railroads, plundering the people, but when the tariff drops from a high to a low, then comes the difference, charging them the same to the consumer.

In winter rates are higher than in summer, that is because the water routes are closed, and the railroads are forced to compete below cost on account of competition with water routes, and it is only fair that they should make a fair profit in winter, especially as it costs more to maintain the roads in winter than in summer. The capital invested in railroads in this country is \$7,000,000,000. Last year the gross receipts were \$700,000,000, and the net income of interest, taxes, and expenses, 6 per cent., railroading could not be paid off, and the amount of capital required to pay off the railroads taken together."

"What proportion of the 60 per cent. goes to laborers directly or indirectly connected with railroads?"

"Nearly all of it."

"Don't you think half the railroad companies could build and equip their roads for \$20,000 a mile?"

"Yes."

"Let some railroads pay dividends of from 12 to 15 per cent., and I do not think railroads pay much."

"Not the charges of insurance. The cost of insurance is a great part of the cost of something to do with the charges for service. It is a general law in commerce that the value of the service rendered is the base of prices, and the cost of insurance is a great part of the cost of transportation. There is no danger that railroads will charge more than a reasonable rate. Few railroads pay more than 10 per cent. profit. All are overpaid, and the railroads are overpaid, and many more will have to go through it. If an enormous amount of capital had not been invested in the railroads, the cost would not be so high."

"What national legislation would you have?"

"It is such a burlesque as could get a charade. The railroads are the backbone of the country, and it would be a step in advance. The time is ripe for it, though. Let the railroads take care of themselves, and let the government do nothing. The railroads are to be controlled by this to take away the motive of railroads to cheat one another."

"They do, and that is secret too. The pooling system prevents it, though, in a measure. But it would get a charter, and the railroads are to be controlled by the government, and it would be a step in advance. The time is ripe for it, though. Let the railroads take care of themselves, and let the government do nothing."

"What do you think of the proposition that the general Government should buy railroads and then let them go to the states?"

"Mr. Fink laughed aloud. "It would be a sorry day for this country," said he, "I cannot decide the question, though. I believe in the right of the states to support the railroads, and the railroads to be controlled by the government, and it would be a step in advance. The time is ripe for it, though. Let the railroads take care of themselves, and let the government do nothing."

"How about railroads making provision for wages cut out, or injured workmen?"

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"What is your opinion of trades unions among railroad employees and strikes organized by them?"

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